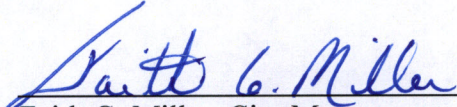


## AGENDA MEMO

**TO:** Mayor & City Commission      **AGENDA DATE:** 11/15/2010  
**FROM:** Faith G. Miller, City Manager      **AGENDA ITEM:** 5 - A  
**SUBJECT:** Certificate of Recognition - Sheriff's Office Employee of the Quarter - Investigator Aaron Blais.

<b>LOCATION:</b>	N/A
<b>BACKGROUND:</b>	Certificate of Recognition given to Investigator Aaron Blais for being selected as the Investigator of the Quarter for the Volusia County Sheriff's Office and for a job well done for the City of Deltona.
<b>ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT:</b>	City Manager's Office
<b>SOURCE OF FUNDS:</b>	N/A
<b>COST:</b>	N/A
<b>REVIEWED BY:</b>	Faith G. Miller, City Manager
<b>STAFF RECOMMENDATION PRESENTED BY:</b>	N/A - Presentation Only.
<b>POTENTIAL MOTION:</b>	N/A - Presentation Only.
<b>AGENDA ITEM APPROVED BY:</b>	 Faith G. Miller, City Manager
<b>ATTACHMENTS:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Aaron Blais Certificate</li><li>• VSCO Press Release/Aaron Blais</li></ul>



# *Certificate of Recognition*



This certificate is awarded to

*Aaron Blais*

*Volusia County Sheriff's Office*

The City of Deltona would like to honor Aaron Blais for being selected as the Volusia County Sheriff's Office's Investigator of the Quarter. In September, Blais was instrumental in confiscating a large amount of cash and illegal drugs from a suspected drug dealer. He has been with the VCSO for five years and is currently an auto theft investigator but often takes on multiple challenges. By following a tip of some drug activity in Deltona, Blais was able to track and assist in the arrest of the suspect.

*John Maciarczyk, Mayor*

*Date*



**Wendi Jackson**

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**From:** Haught, Brandon [BHaught@vcso.us]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 02, 2010 11:59 AM  
**To:** Davidson, Gary  
**Subject:** VCISO News Release: Sheriff's Office Employees of the Quarter Honored  
**Attachments:** EOQ\_3rd\_10.jpg

## Volusia County Sheriff's Office

Ben F. Johnson, Sheriff

# News Release

Post Office Box 569, DeLand, FL 32721-0569  
Office: (386) 254-4602; (386) 736-5989; Mobile: (386) 804-4176  
Fax: (386) 736-5986 Media Line: (386) 740-5253  
E-mail: [BHaught@vcso.us](mailto:BHaught@vcso.us) Web site: <http://volusia.org/sheriff/>  
Crime Stoppers of Northeast Florida 1-888-277-TIPS

Send the PIO a text message: <http://messaging.nextel.com/cgi/iPageExt.dll?cmd=buildIndAddressPage>

November 2, 2010

For immediate release

Contact: Brandon Haught, Public Information Office

**Photo Attachment:** Pictured from left to right are volunteer Curtis Lapiere, deputy Radu Raileanu, Sheriff Ben Johnson, telecommunicator Jessica Brannan, Dana King, and investigator Aaron Blais.

### **SHERIFF'S OFFICE EMPLOYEES OF THE QUARTER HONORED**

Determined seems to be the key word to describe the men and women of the Volusia County Sheriff's Office who earned the honor of being named Employees of the 3rd Quarter of 2010 Tuesday morning. Every one of them demonstrated a passion for their jobs, including a deputy whose expertise keeps a courthouse safe, an investigator who helped take a substantial amount of drugs off the streets, and an extraditions coordinator who went the extra mile to bring a wanted man back to Florida. Also getting awards from Sheriff Ben Johnson at the Deputy Stephen Saboda Training Center in Daytona Beach were a telecommunicator, and a volunteer.

X-ray machines at the county's courthouses are only the starting point in spotting potential threats. It's up to the deputies operating the machines to use their judgment and experience, such as when deputy of the quarter Radu Raileanu intercepted three handguns at the DeLand Courthouse in a four-month period. In one incident the family member of a murder victim attempted to attend the related trial with a loaded handgun hidden in a large briefcase full of papers and other miscellaneous items. The gun was not easily spotted and was only located due to a thorough hand search by Raileanu. The other two handguns were discovered in purses, and the owners claimed that they had forgotten the weapons were in there.

Raileanu's supervisor, Sgt. Jonelle Hillyard, praised him saying: "Your vigilance in this incident possibly could have saved your life along with all the lives of the citizens, workers and deputies in the Courthouse."

A large amount of cash and cocaine was taken out of drug dealers' hands in September due to the leadership of investigator of the quarter Aaron Blais. He has been with the Sheriff's Office for five years and currently is the Auto Theft investigator. But as is often the case with the best investigators, he takes on multiple challenges. When a reliable tip was developed that drug dealers were at a specific location in Deltona, Blais quickly notified narcotics agents while he kept on eye on the suspects' activities. When the suspects drove

away, Blais carefully tracked them and relayed the information to other deputies who were standing by. Finally, a traffic stop led to the discovery of 175 grams of cocaine packaged for sale and more than \$9,000 in cash.

"You've always been there and you've always done a great job," said Sheriff Johnson.

The extraditions coordinator for the Sheriff's Office, Dana King, earned high praise and employee of the quarter honors for her quick and thorough work in helping track down a man in New Hampshire wanted on Volusia County warrants. It started out as just another extradition with King going through all of the standard procedures to have the man transported back to Florida on the local warrants. But a mere half hour before the man was supposed to be picked up, he had been erroneously released by New Hampshire authorities to his family. King made several phone calls to alert authorities about the mistake, leading to the man's re-arrest. King even successfully negotiated to have New Hampshire authorities pay the transport cost to Florida, saving the Volusia County Sheriff's Office more than \$1,000.

"Thank you for what you did," said Sheriff Johnson.

Telecommunicator of the quarter Jessica Brannan was tasked with showing new Sheriff's Office deputy trainees what work was like in the dispatch center. That's when a real life chaotic situation erupted, which showcased how well Brannan could multitask and keep calm under pressure. A Daytona Beach police officer was side-swiped by a suspect vehicle that then fled. The vehicle was lost, but was spotted a short time later by Holly Hill police officers. Eventually, a Sheriff's Office helicopter and several deputies were also involved. Brannan expertly handled the complicated and fast-moving incident involving multiple agencies, leaving a lasting impression on the trainees watching her that night.

Brannan's supervisor, Patricia McDonnell noted, "She is an excellent representative of this division -- not just during this incident, but on a daily basis."

Volunteer of the quarter Curtis Lapiere has only been in the Citizen Observer Program (COP) for less than two years, but he's already made a lasting impact in the New Smyrna Beach district. He's accumulated more than 1,500 volunteer hours while serving on both the leadership and training teams. He organized the district fingerprinting team, which, among other achievements, successfully fingerprinted 74 pre-school children in a two hour period. Lapiere also assumed leadership of the county-wide COP Honor Guard. His leadership has helped double the Honor Guard's membership, allowing the unit to participate in two functions at once for the first time.

The COP district director, Andrew Cygi, praised Lapiere, saying: "He has achieved a record of dedication and leadership unequaled by most, regardless of their years of service."

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